

9 June 1993

Chancellor Helmut Kohl

Excellency,

We are deeply concerned at the recent arrest by the German authorities of Rabih Kabir and Oussama Madani, reportedly in response to an arrest warrant issued by the Algerian government.

Oussama Madani is the son of the FIS President and Rabih Kabir is the head of the FIS Foreign Relations Committee who was in process of applying for asylum in Germany. He was last month sentenced to death in absentia after a secret trial which was declared illegitimate by lawyers and human rights groups both inside and outside Algeria. If either is returned to Algeria his life will undoubtedly be in great danger from the authorities.

Since the elections were cancelled in Algeria and the democratic process was not allowed to continue, the situation in that country with regard to human rights has deteriorated abysmally. If it is true that Germany has acted in response to an Algerian request we would point out that the Algerian government is itself illegitimate. The two arrested are in Germany solely because there is no safety for them in Algeria for political reasons, not because of any crime they have committed. The noble principles of asylum are ancient and should be sacrosanct. They apply to many thousands who are currently taking refuge in Germany and Western Europe all of whom will feel threatened by Germany's action.

We urge you to have their cases reviewed and order their immediate release.

Yours sincerely,

Salem Azzam

Salem Azzam
Secretary General